

RUNNING WITH THE DEVIL

SOULE • GARNEY • MILLA

MARVEL

#20

DART DEVIL



MIKE
TEODALDO
JR.
09

WHEN MATT MURDOCK WAS A KID, HE LOST HIS SIGHT IN AN ACCIDENT INVOLVING A TRUCK CARRYING RADIOACTIVE CHEMICALS. THOUGH HE COULD NO LONGER SEE, THE CHEMICALS HEIGHTENED MURDOCK'S OTHER SENSES AND IMBUED HIM WITH AN AMAZING 360-RADAR SENSE. NOW MATT USES HIS ABILITIES TO FIGHT FOR HIS CITY. HE IS THE *MAN WITHOUT FEAR*. HE IS...

DAREDEVIL

"PURPLE" CONCLUSION

ONCE, THE WORLD KNEW THAT MATT MURDOCK WAS THE ALTER EGO OF DAREDEVIL. SOMEHOW, MATT FOUND A WAY TO GET HIS SECRET IDENTITY BACK UNDER WRAPS. HE HAS NEVER TOLD ANYONE HOW HE MANAGED THIS FEAT, BUT MATT HAS NOW DECIDED TO RELATE HIS STORY TO FATHER JORDAN...A STORY THAT BEGINS WITH THE PURPLE CHILDREN AND LEADS TO THE SINISTER PLAN OF THE PURPLE MAN—ZEBEDIAH KILLGRAVE—PUTTING THE ENTIRE WORLD UNDER HIS CONTROL. WITH THE HELP OF THE PURPLE CHILDREN, AND HIS OWN STRONG WILL, DAREDEVIL WAS ABLE TO DEFEAT KILLGRAVE, BUT THE STORY DOESN'T END THERE...

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SAN FRANCISCO.
THEN.

*I didn't
know what
I'd done.*

When the Purple Man had me
under his control, he'd taken me
to Kirsten McDuffie, the woman
I loved, and...

...to this day, I don't know.
I was so deep in my own head...
was it a hallucination? Was
I really there? Did anything
actually happen?

*I didn't
know.*

*But I had
to find out.*



I'm not sure I've ever moved that fast. Just...racing across San Francisco.

Leaping out into space, hoping something would catch me as I fell.

It was *reckless*. I didn't care. I was only thinking about Kirsten.

I should have been thinking about the *Purple Children*.

YOU WANT TO HELP DAREDEVIL?

SEEMS LIKE THE RIGHT THING TO DO, I MEAN, HE'S SAVED US FROM KILLGRAVE...A BUNCH OF TIMES.

I KNOW, JOE...BUT HOW? WHAT CAN WE EVEN DO?

I'm just *speculating* that they were involved. But it makes sense. Nothing else really does.

After all, they had the power. Same as Zebediah Killgrave, their father-- the ability to control people's minds.

They had the power...

...and they had the means.

KILLGRAVE USED THIS MACHINE TO MAKE DAREDEVIL DO BAD THINGS TO SO MANY PEOPLE... LIKE EVERYONE.

IT WASN'T DAREDEVIL'S FAULT, BUT EVERYONE'S GOING TO BLAME HIM, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THEY KNOW WHO HE IS. MATT MURDOCK.

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? I BET WE CAN FIX THAT.

ESPECIALLY IF WE USE HIM.

EEEEUUPPHH...

OH, MAN. THIS IS GONNA BE AWESOME.

I really think they were just trying to help.



I still don't know exactly what they did.

But all in all, with everything I've come to understand since that day--it feels...simple...like the way children solve problems.

Let's say you're playing with your dad's watch, and you break it. An adult would own up to it, get it fixed. A kid...

...would hide it.

YOU DON'T KNOW DAREDEVIL'S REAL NAME.

ANYTHING YOU SEE OR HEAR OR LEARN THAT TELLS YOU WHO DAREDEVIL IS, YOU WON'T SEE OR HEAR OR LEARN, UNLESS DAREDEVIL WANTS YOU TO.

DAREDEVIL DOES GOOD THINGS.

FORGET ANYTHING ELSE.

The effect was pretty wide-ranging, I know that.

The publisher who'd paid millions for Matt Murdock's autobiography canceled the contract when he realized all he'd be getting was a book about a lawyer.

And when I got back to New York, I barely had to pull any strings to get myself reinstated to the bar.

I think no one could remember any reason why I *shouldn't* be readmitted.

Thanks to the Purple Children, everyone had gone *blind*.



I don't know exactly what they did.

But I remember the moment I found out.



KIRSTEN! ARE YOU... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

Kirsten seemed physically fine, and more importantly, she didn't seem *afraid* of me.



The *relief* I felt at that...you have no idea.

OF COURSE! YOU DIDN'T LET ANY OF THOSE PEOPLE LAY A HAND ON ME. I WAS IN THE PANIC ROOM THE WHOLE TIME.

I HOPE THOSE PURPLE KIDS ARE OKAY, THOUGH. THEY SEEMED TERRIFIED.

And then she said my name.



ANYWAY, MATT'S NOT HERE. DON'T YOU GUYS HAVE, LIKE, A SECRET DAREDEVIL-SIGNAL OR SOMETHING?

OR MAYBE YOU CAN JUST TEXT HIM NEXT TIME INSTEAD OF CLIMBING THROUGH MY WINDOW?



...WHAT?





I could have just taken off my mask right there-- but I didn't.

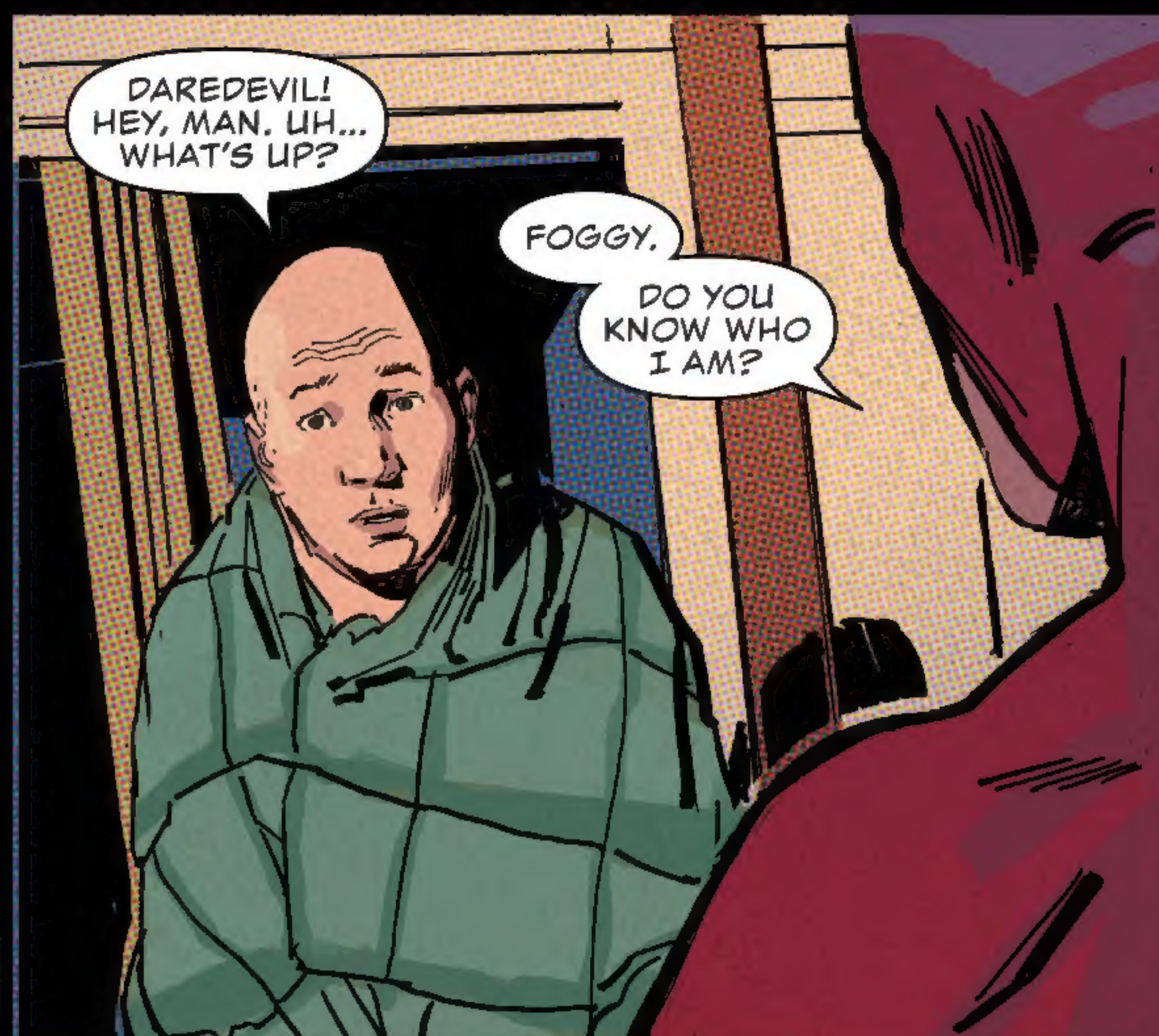
I think about that a lot, to this very day.



Maybe it's because I didn't understand what was happening yet, and didn't want to rock the boat.

Or maybe it's because I understood perfectly.

After what happened with Kirsten, there was only one place to go.



DAREDEVIL! HEY, MAN. UH... WHAT'S UP?

FOGGY.

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?



UH... I JUST SAID IT. DAREDEVIL.

YOU OKAY?

He didn't know either. I was just a man in a mask.

And right then...



...that was more than I could handle.

GOD ALMIGHTY! MATT!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING? IS THIS SOME KIND OF--



WAIT.



I KNEW THAT. I'VE KNOWN THAT FOR YEARS. BUT JUST NOW...I DIDN'T. YOU WERE JUST...DAREDEVIL. A GUY WHO DOES GOOD THINGS.

MATT... WHAT IS THIS?

I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T THINK IT'S JUST YOU. KIRSTEN DOESN'T KNOW WHO I AM EITHER.



DOESN'T KNOW? YOU HAVEN'T TOLD HER?

NO. NOT YET. I NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE SCOPE OF ALL THIS. HOW IT HAPPENED.

THIS IS HUGE. I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW I COULD JUST FORGET. IT'S LIKE SOMEONE REACHED INTO MY MIND AND JUST FLIPPED A SWITCH.



OH, MY GOD. I THINK I UNDERSTAND. STAY HERE, FOGGY.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

IF I CAN...



...I'M GOING TO FIX THIS.



But I couldn't
fix anything.

It was too late.
The Purple Children
had destroyed the
Psycho-Prism
and left.

They just vanished.
I haven't seen
them since...and
I've looked.

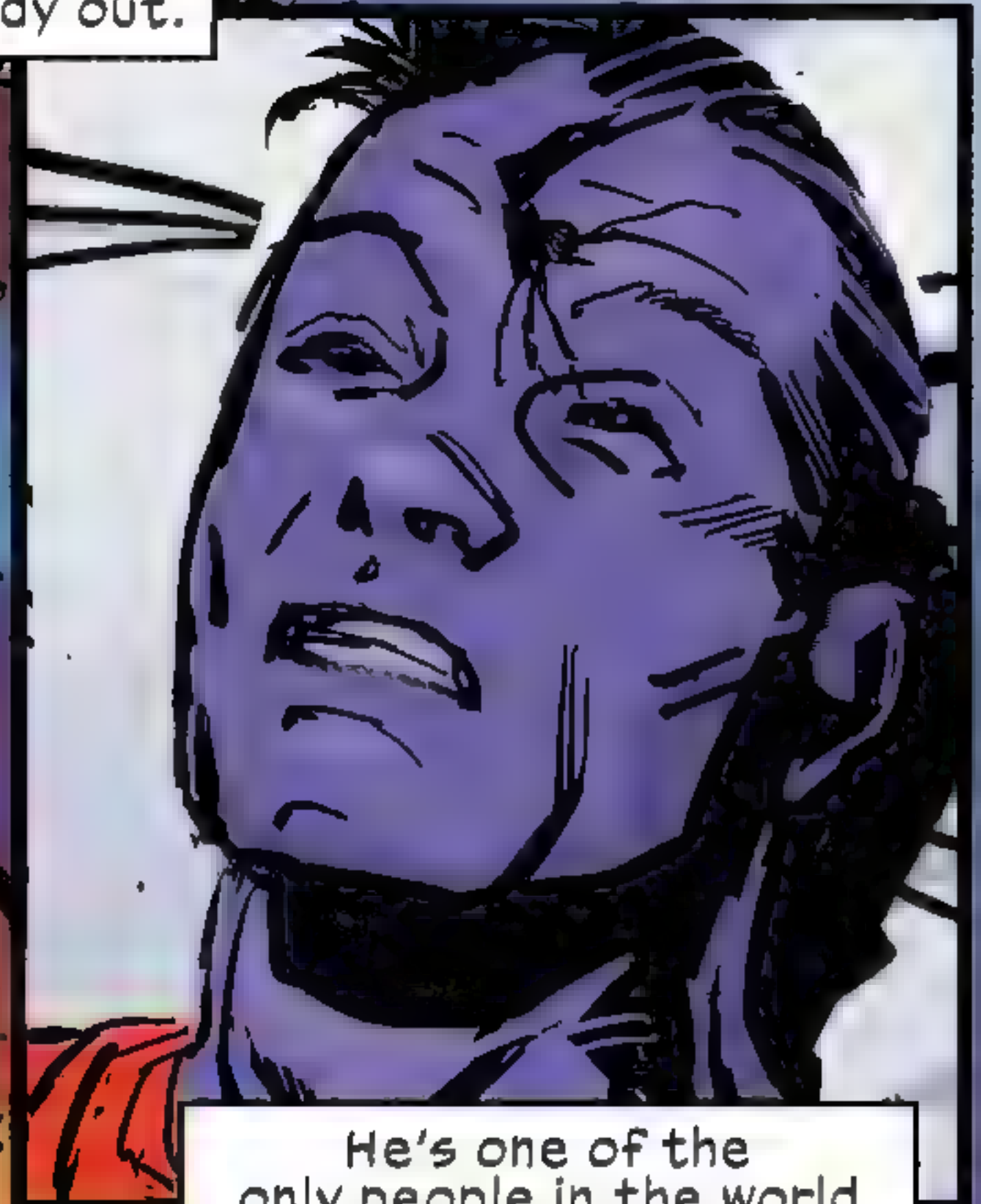
All they
left me...



...was their
father.

The cops came to take him away, to put him in some other ultra-high-security prison he would absolutely escape from in time.

In fact, he's already out.



He's one of the only people in the world who knows who I am, and he's using that knowledge to toy with me.

He sent someone from my past to attack me not long ago.

He'd altered her memories... her *mind*...and aimed her at me like a bullet from a gun.

I survived that... barely...but now Elektra knows what was done to her, and we're *both* looking for Killgrave.



He should pray I find him first.

THANK YOU, DAREDEVIL. SERIOUSLY.

The cops had forgotten my real name, too. But that, at least, seemed good.

No more suspicion. No more thinking I was taking down criminals to pad my autobiography.



Just...me. Doing my job. Trying to help.

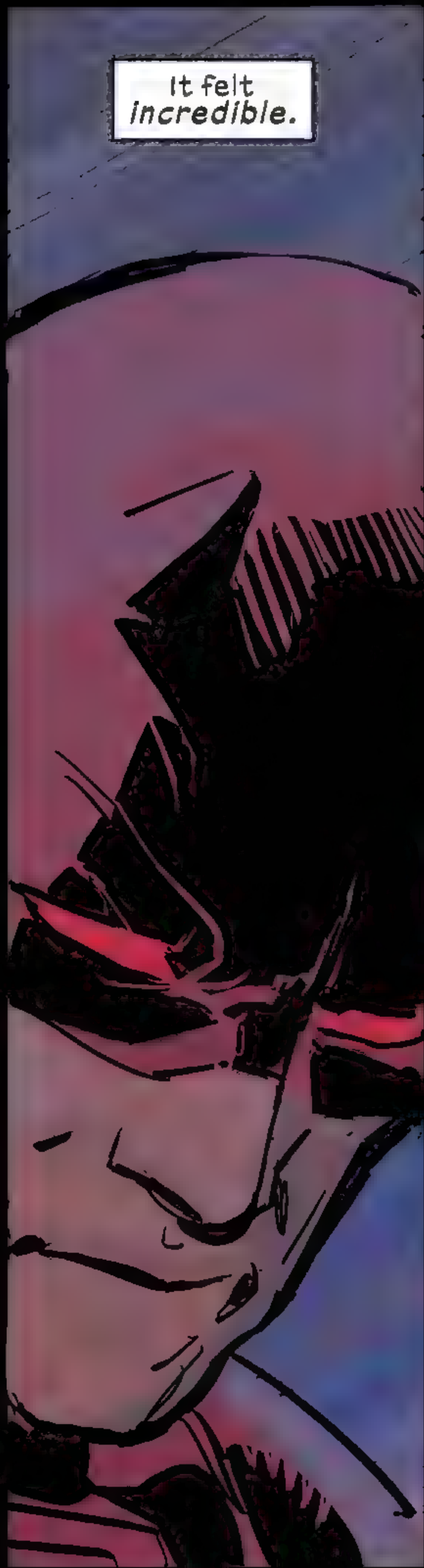






I hadn't done anything like that in a *long* time. Just tearing through a city, going after every bad guy I could find.

I hadn't *let* myself, out of fear that the involvement of Matt Murdock could spoil some poor D.A.'s case, or snap back to hit Kirsten somehow.



It felt *Incredible*.



But that's not really why I did it.

I could have done that *any* night.



I just didn't want to go *home*.



MANHATTAN.

NOW.

MATT,
PLEASE,
HOLD ON A
SECOND.

WE'VE
BEEN TALKING
FOR AGES. I
UNDERSTAND YOU
HAVE A LOT TO
GET OFF YOUR
CHEST...

...BUT
ARE YOU
GOING TO ACTUALLY
CONFESS TO
SOMETHING?

WAIT...
WHAT?

FATHER JORDAN, I TOLD YOU I
NEARLY KILLED ZEBEDIAH KILLGRAVE,
AND THEN I PUT HALF OF THE
CRIMINALS IN SAN FRANCISCO
IN THE HOSPITAL.

YOU
SURE DID. AND
WHEN YOU TOLD ME
ABOUT THOSE THINGS,
YOU KNOW WHAT I
DIDN'T HEAR IN
YOUR VOICE?

REMORSE.

WHATEVER
BROUGHT YOU TO
ME, WHATEVER GOT YOU
BACK IN THIS CONFESSIONAL
AFTER THE LORD ONLY
KNOWS HOW LONG
AWAY...

...I
HAVEN'T HEARD
IT YET.

I...
YOU'RE
RIGHT.



I never told Kirsten what happened.

I never wanted her to know I was Daredevil. I never want *anyone* to know. It's too *dangerous*.



BUT YOU TOLD FOGGY. RIGHT AWAY.

I...YES. I DID. HE'S STILL ANGRY ABOUT THAT.

I EXPLAINED. I TOLD HIM ABOUT HOW I WAS GOING TO MAKE IT ALL WORTH IT...MY PLAN TO END CRIME IN THE CITY, ALL OF IT.

HE WOULDN'T HEAR IT. HE WAS SO ANGRY. HE STILL IS.



Maybe I could have told Kirsten who I was, and we would have been safe for a while.

But eventually, we wouldn't. Something would have happened. It always does.

This was a chance for a *clean break*, a way to end things that would give her every reason to move on with her life, to keep her out of danger.



I tell myself that, but the truth is... I am Daredevil.

And I was afraid.



When I had the chance to tell her the truth...

...I didn't.



But it's worse than that. I could have chosen *her*. I could have left Daredevil behind forever, gone back to law, made a life with her. But...

...I couldn't. Instead...


KIRSTEN.




...I told her
it was over.



I told her I
was sorry.




I told her I
would always
love her.

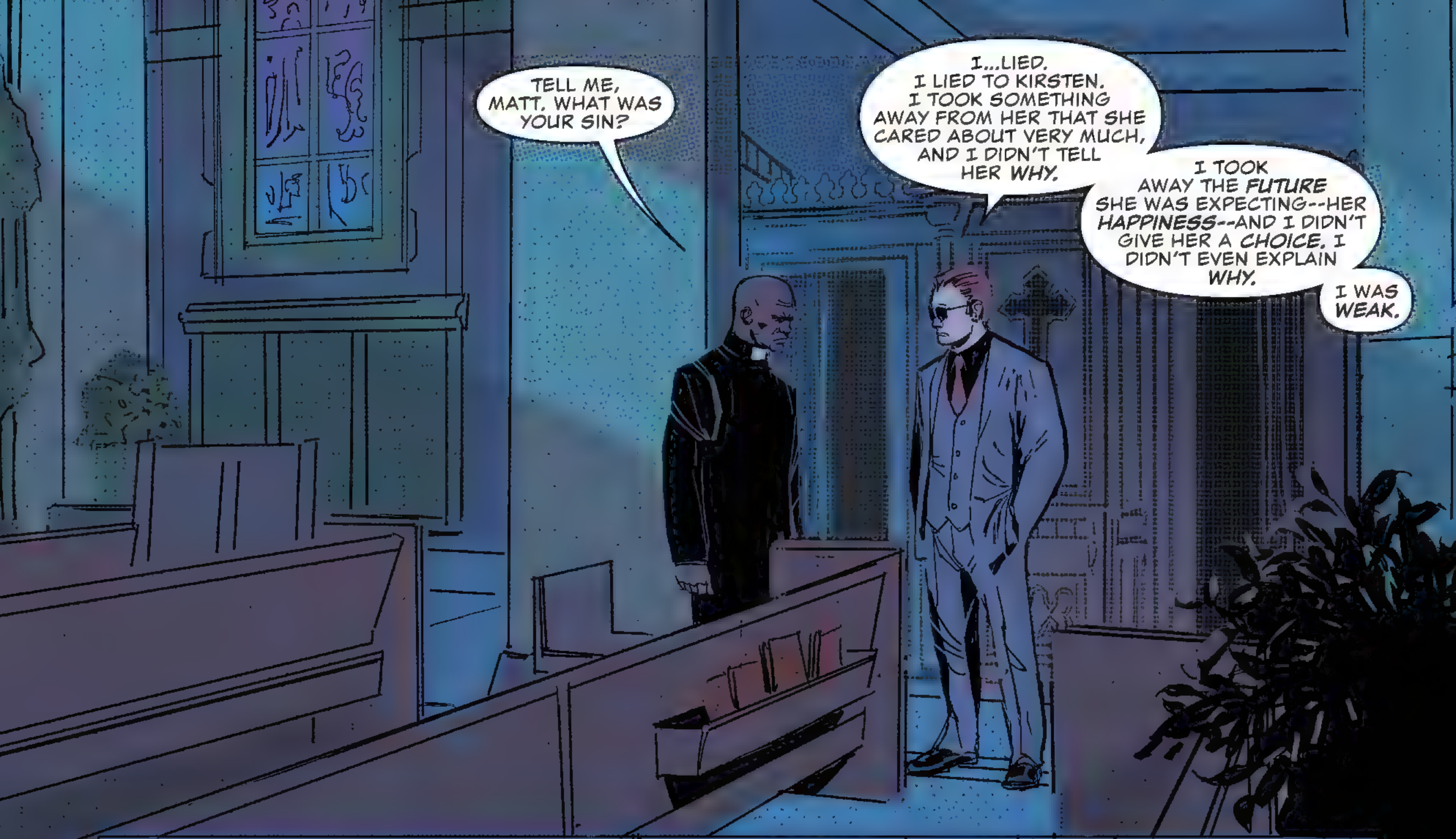


I told her
I needed to go
back to New York,
and I needed
to go alone.

YEAH,
WELL...



...DON'T
LET THE DOOR
HIT YOU IN THE
ASS ON THE
WAY OUT.

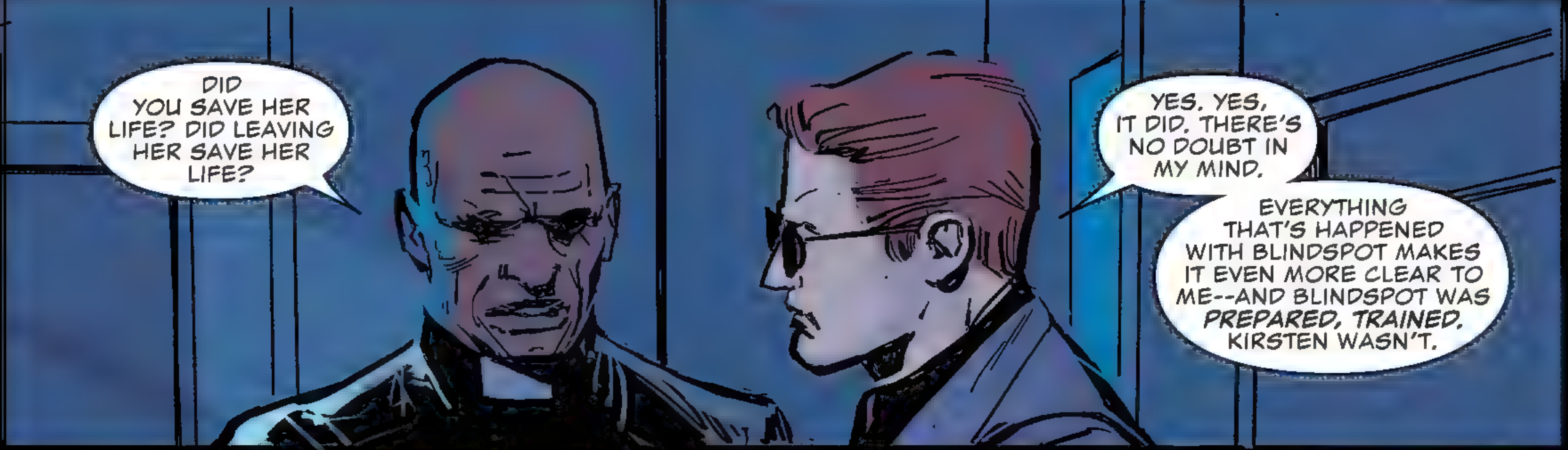


TELL ME, MATT. WHAT WAS YOUR SIN?

I...LIED. I LIED TO KIRSTEN. I TOOK SOMETHING AWAY FROM HER THAT SHE CARED ABOUT VERY MUCH, AND I DIDN'T TELL HER WHY.

I TOOK AWAY THE FUTURE SHE WAS EXPECTING--HER HAPPINESS--AND I DIDN'T GIVE HER A CHOICE. I DIDN'T EVEN EXPLAIN WHY.

I WAS WEAK.



DID YOU SAVE HER LIFE? DID LEAVING HER SAVE HER LIFE?

YES. YES, IT DID. THERE'S NO DOUBT IN MY MIND.

EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED WITH BLINDSPOT MAKES IT EVEN MORE CLEAR TO ME--AND BLINDSPOT WAS PREPARED, TRAINED, KIRSTEN WASN'T.



SO, TO BE CLEAR...YOU SAVED HER, AND YOU ALSO SAVED EVERYONE IN THE WORLD FROM WHATEVER DEPREDATIONS THE PURPLE MAN WAS PLANNING.

AND BECAUSE OF THAT, YOU FELT COMPELLED TO CONFESS?



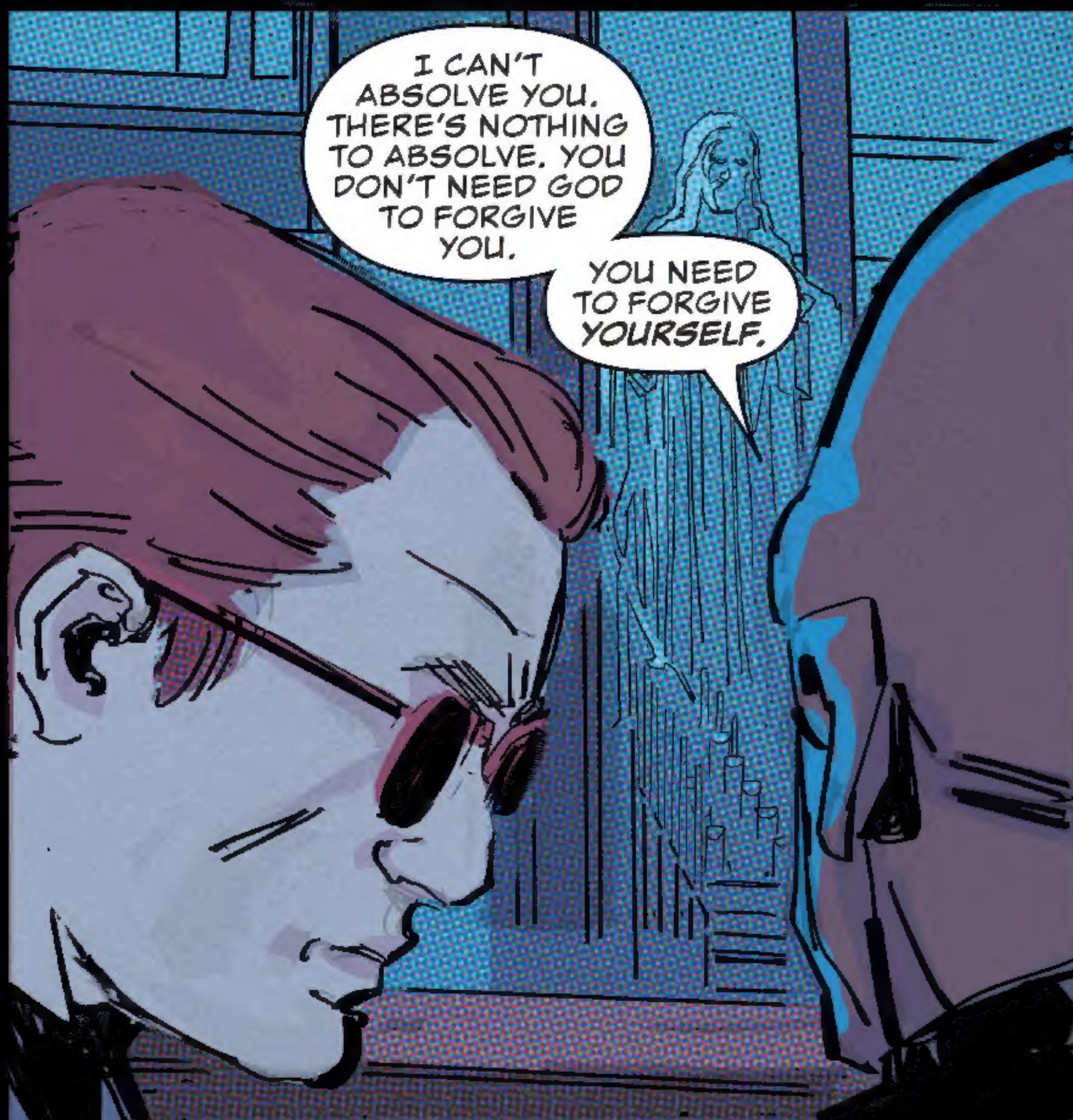
GOOD OLD CATHOLIC GUILT. REALLY DOES A NUMBER ON YOU, EH?



YOU ENDED A RELATIONSHIP WITH WHAT SOUNDS LIKE A WONDERFUL WOMAN IN A WAY YOU AREN'T PROUD OF. YOU WERE WEAK. YOU WERE AFRAID.

BUT THOSE THINGS AREN'T SINS. THEY'RE HUMAN NATURE, AND DESPITE THE INCREDIBLE THINGS YOU CAN DO...

...YOU ARE STILL HUMAN.



I CAN'T ABSOLVE YOU. THERE'S NOTHING TO ABSOLVE. YOU DON'T NEED GOD TO FORGIVE YOU.

YOU NEED TO FORGIVE YOURSELF.



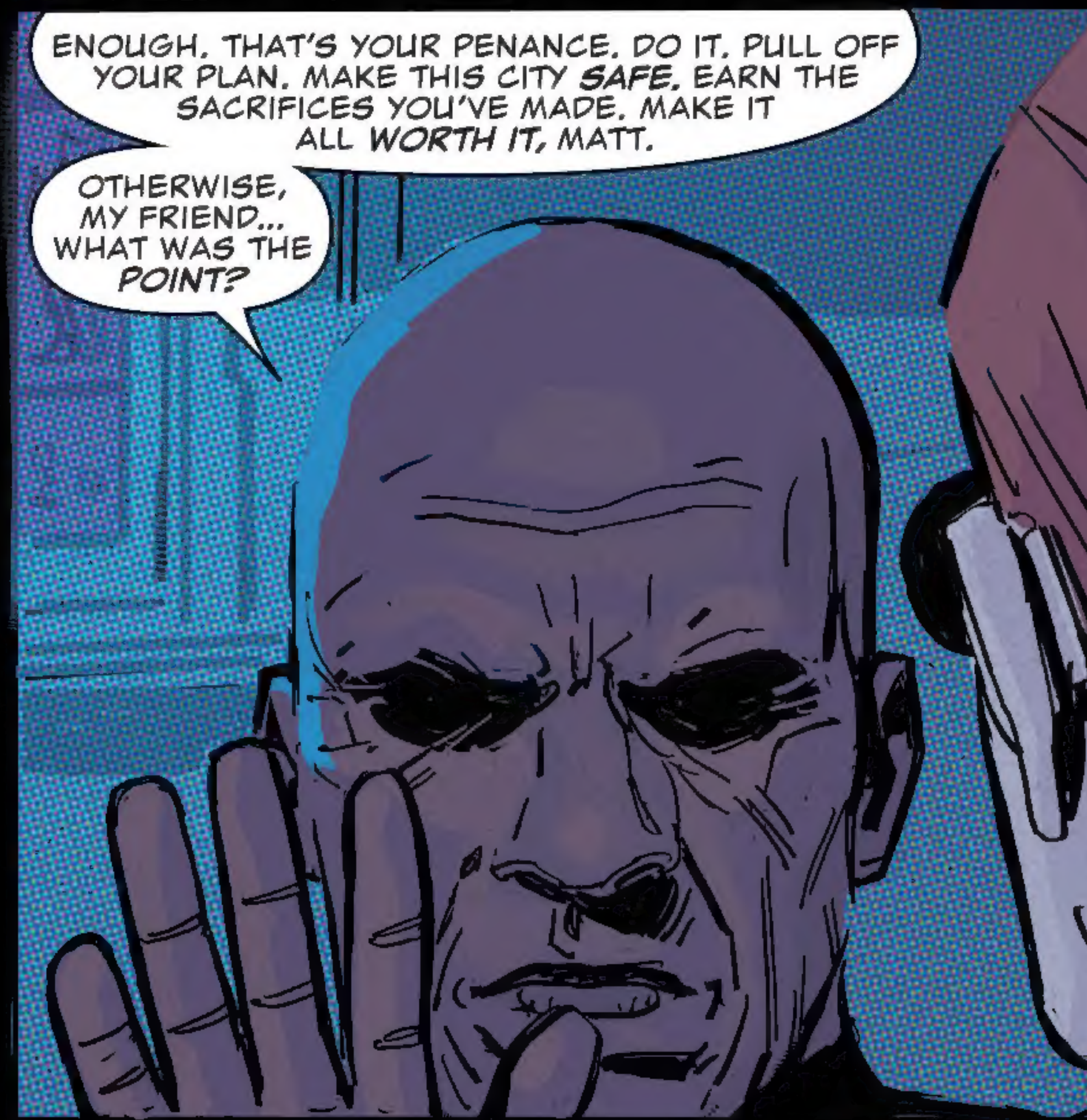
~~SIGH~~
YOU WANT ME TO ASSIGN YOU SOME PENANCE? WOULD THAT HELP?

THAT'D BE GREAT, THANKS.

OKAY, YOU MENTIONED SOME BIG PLAN, ENDING CRIME IN NEW YORK CITY. HAVE YOU DONE THAT YET?

I'VE BEEN WORKING ON IT, BUT IT'S RISKY.

I NEED THE RIGHT CASE, AND THINGS AT THE D.A.'S OFFICE HAVEN'T EXACTLY BEEN--



ENOUGH, THAT'S YOUR PENANCE. DO IT. PULL OFF YOUR PLAN. MAKE THIS CITY **SAFE**, EARN THE SACRIFICES YOU'VE MADE. MAKE IT ALL WORTH IT, MATT.

OTHERWISE, MY FRIEND... WHAT WAS THE POINT?



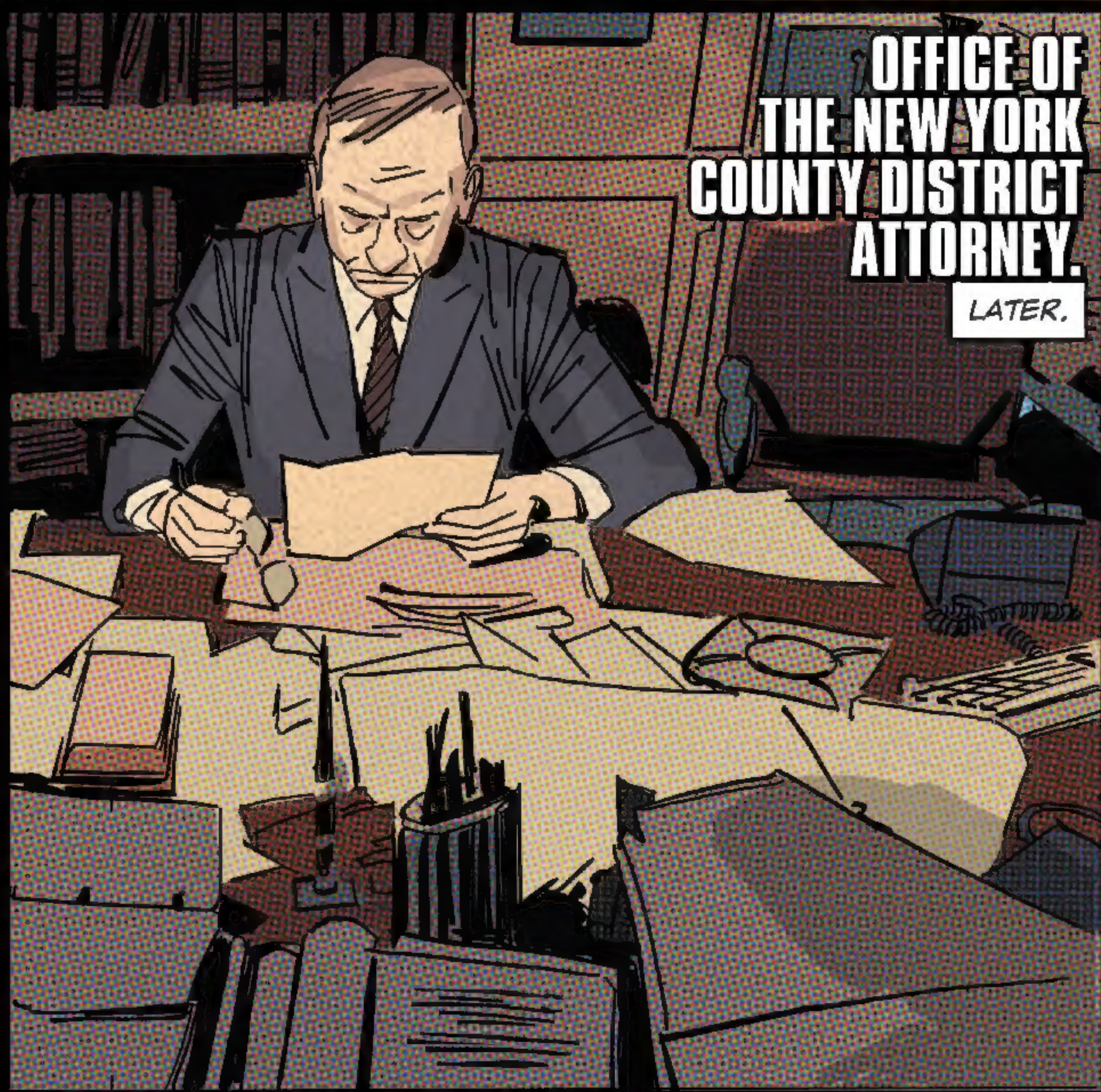
GOODBYE, AND GOOD LUCK. I'LL BE HERE IF YOU NEED ME.



THANK YOU.

OFFICE OF
THE NEW YORK
COUNTY DISTRICT
ATTORNEY.

LATER.



EH?
WHAT'S
THIS?

SOMETHING
I'VE BEEN WORKING
ON FOR A WHILE, MR.
HOCHBERG. SORT OF A
PLAN--A WAY TO ADJUST
THE WAY THIS CITY
HANDLES CRIME.

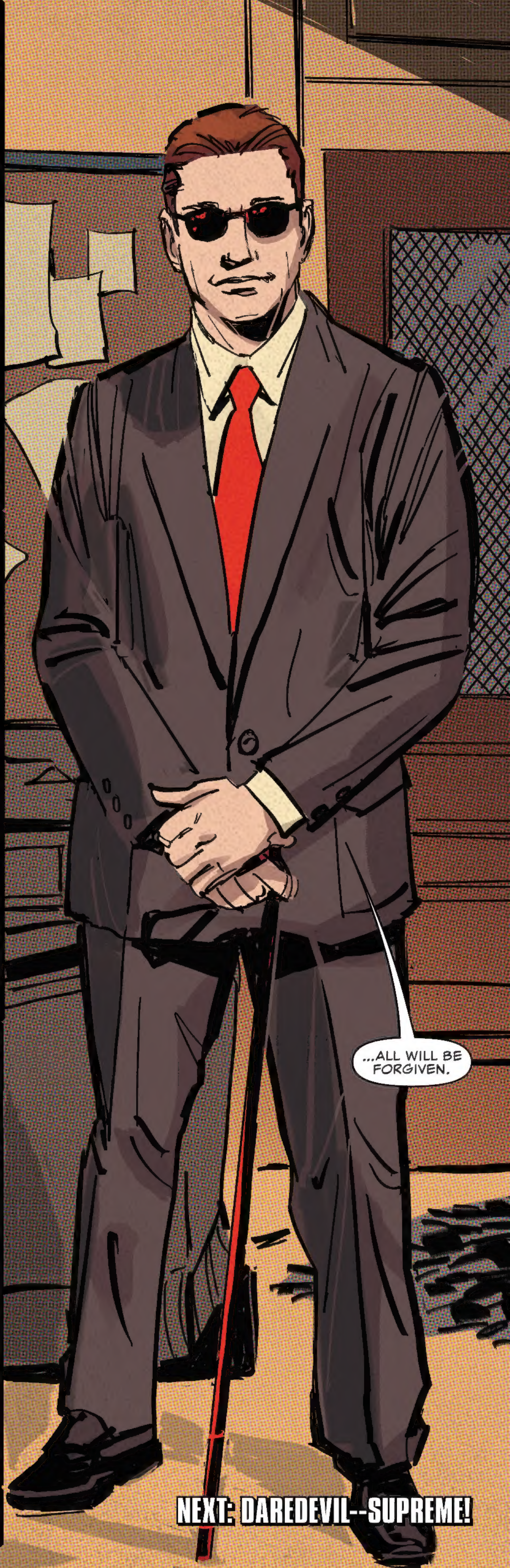
COULD CHANGE
EVERYTHING.



I'M NOT SURE YOU'LL LIKE
IT, AND I KNOW I HAVEN'T
EARNED MUCH CREDIBILITY
HERE YET.

THAT
SCREWUP IN THE
TENFINGERS CASE
EARLY ON, THE ABSENCES,
FRICTION WITH THE OTHER
A.D.A.s...ALL OF
IT.

BUT IF IT
WORKS...



...ALL WILL BE
FORGIVEN.

NEXT: DAREDEVIL--SUPREME!

NEXT ISSUE:

"SUPREME" BEGINS!

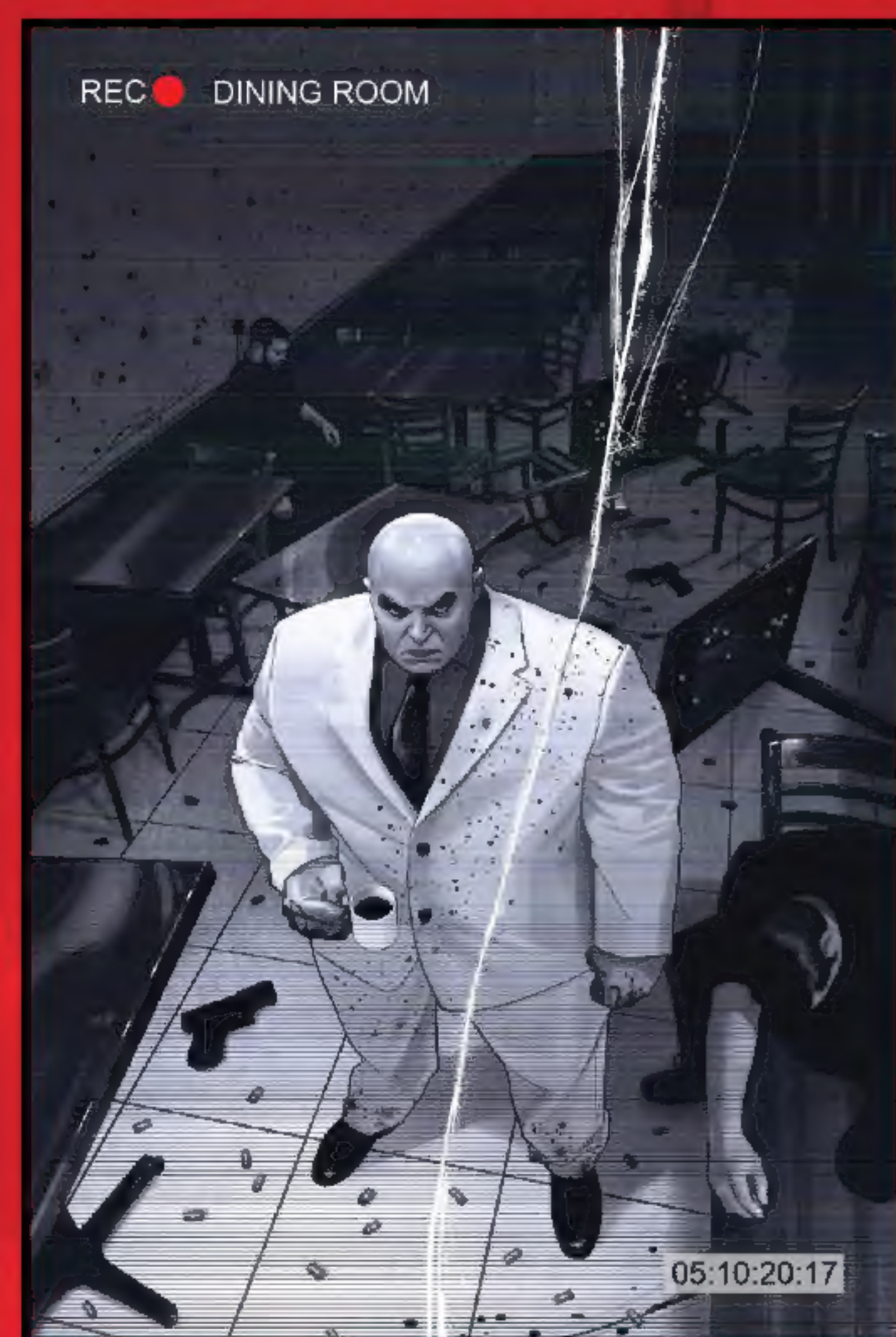


DAREDEVIL #21

ALSO ON SALE THIS MONTH



BULLSEYE #4 - ON SALE NOW



KINGPIN #4 - ON SALE NOW



ELEKTRA #4

